137 areas, the wild olive, wäyra, is preferred, because it is
313 available, a hardwood, yet not difficult to split. Ease of splitting is always a most important consideration because of the population's simple tools and disinclination to expend effort to change what nature provides. Another olive, the wanza (Cordia abyssinica, a coarsely porous light wood), is popular for smoking out beer jars and other pottery before and after use. The yellow, cherry-like olive is one of the available wild fruit trees.

On lower levels of plateau elevation, the acacia known as grar is found in many varieties, often as the "umbrella tree". Generally the wood is hard, used in construction, and even more popular as fuel, especially as charcoal for firing pottery. Lowland trees include the termite-resistant Natal yellow pine, the giant sycamore, mimosa(also called grar), gum trees, lemon, and a small size banana.

137 One of the most popular trees, especially in the larger
824 centers of population on the plateau, was imported by Em-
177 peror Menelik II about half a century ago: the odoriferous, water-holding eucalyptus, called bahēr zaf (lit. the tree from overseas). Although there are no real forests of it, it is the most noticeable tree in Ethiopia, planted around houses, in wooded clumps between urban sections, towering above the native plateau trees. It grows so fast that in some areas it can be "harvested", primarily for construction purposes, after only five years.

137 A common sight on lower slopes is the euphorbia, qul-
278 qwal, which resembles an immense, spiny chandelier with
824 multiple branches. Its milky sap is used in some native

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5



137 remedies. The nutmeg tree, tosiya, is also medicinal, and
● 824 the Kosso tree is widely used against tapeworm. Common sights include the reddish ret, a cactus; and just as soon as the rainy season ends, the yellow daisy, adäy abäba carpets the landscape, heralding the masqal holiday. Hence it
136 is also called mäsqäl abäba. A study of the FAUNA connections between Ethiopia and surrounding areas contributes significantly to the understanding of Ethiopia's cultures from ancient times to the present.

The last remnant of the prehistoric belt of tropical forest that once stretched from Africa to India, is found today in Dhofar, Southern Arabia. There, in the Gara mountains, Bertram Thomas collected fossil fauna which is definitely Ethiopic and which also evidences links to southern India.[8] Animal husbandry in Yemen in prehistoric times was apparently based on hump-necked cattle of Indian origin. This cattle complex reached Africa late, probably as late
[231] as 1000 B.C.[9] To this day, the cattle of Ethiopia is hump-necked, though cave paintings clearly show domestic cattle without humps.

171 Social and religious regulations associated with the
231 cattle complex among the Cushitic-speaking tribesmen of southern Ethiopia, are very similar to sets of the same regulations among the Gara tribesmen of Dhofar. Both despise hunters and artisans, but also consider agriculture a most ignoble occupation.

8. Coon: Southern Arabia. Papers of the Peabody Museum, Vol. 20., 1943, p. 209.
9. Ibid.

342 sega byet - where meat is stored after sundrying in strips;

wät byet - the kitchen hut;

gemja byet - the "treasury" house, general storehouse of tools and weapons, drums, decorations.

tej byet - honeymead brewery; talla byet - beer brewery, worked by women.

engeda byet- guest hut;

adarash - reception hut, larger, less solid, used for banqueting;

mänyeta byet - (lit. bedroom house), the master's bedroom hut;

"mad byet" - dining hut for daily dining.

565 352 The noble also has carpets ("sägaja") to sit on or, in feudal tents, to use as tapestry. These are carried from long distances, where specialists live, or are imported. He also has hardwood stools ("dekkwa") to sit on, cut out of solid tree trunks. In a wooden storage box he has one or several burnos, and one or several "kaba" (a dark, woolen mantle). Guests receive their coffee in small imported glazed china cups instead of clay ones, and the reed table is a "massob wərq", with dyed braids of imported dyes, in geometric designs.

824 461 C. What Nature Provides: Lumbering, Hunting, Fishing, Collecting

Much of what little ingenuity goes into Amhara material culture is applied to the direct exploitation of natural resources. He would rather spend days and weeks

824 461 searching for suitably shaped hard or soft saplings and other woods and certain herbs, than perform carpentry or much transplanting. Apart from saddle-making, the alga-bed, and simple musical instruments, one can hardly speak of any carpentry.

824 313 In preparation for housebuilding and other activities connected with lumbering, the timber provided by nature is divided, in the Amhara view, into two major categories: Male, i.e. hard wood or strong wood; Female or soft, less consistent, or easily pliable woods. Heaviness or lightness are not major categories (as in Western countries).

Male woods ("wandē enchāt") and their uses include the following:

Wild Olive Tree ("wāyra") (olea chrysophylla), one of the hardest; often heavy and massive, found on the edge of forests, brown-black in color, quite oily. Used for construction on plateau, e.g. as saplings for walls, rafters, etc. The small twigs [515] are in common use as "toothbrushes". They are chewed and used to clean teeth and polish gums, as a leisure-time activity after meals.

"Wanza" (Cordia abyssinica), a light but hard wood which is found very commonly and is therefore popular; used to make the yokes of oxen, saddles, low, round chairs and other equipment that takes much punishment in use, such as riflestocks when the original has broken.

"Mulkeffa" (Dombeya Bruceana), very hard, used for clubs, e.g. as pestle in the women's crushing of barley.

824
313

"Balla", after weeks of searching, a strong tree trunk is selected, after weeks of searching, to serve as center post for the new tuqul.

"Tequr enchät" (Pygeum Africanum), actually light red (lit. black wood), a porous hardwood, commonly available, which seasons well.

[278
569]

Rosewood, "Kosso" (Brayera anthelmintica) the search for which is a major occupation and livelihood of poor widows, since the bark and twigs are consumed against tapeworm. It is a heavy wood which can take a fine polish, thus more commonly used in noble homes. It is commonly available, at edge of "dega" upland forest.

"qarqaha", a bamboo of river valleys, can grow up to 5" in diameter, commonly used as major posts in tents of feudal lords during their military campaigns.

"yäbäraha shemäl" (bambusa abyssinica), lit. "bamboo of the jungle", a strong bamboo from the qolla lowland, traded from there in former times to serve as a staff for the spear; now used by shepherds as staff, and to fend off dogs, also for some simple furniture.

[778] Male wood is also called "täbot enchät" because hardwood is used to make the tabot, the sacred tablet inscribed with the name of a church, placed in the inner sanctum, symbolizing the Ark of Moses in the Holy of Holies in Jerusalem.

824 313 Female woods ("enest enchat") are preferred and much more used than hardwoods, if the purposes permit, because they are more easily worked:

"Ted" (Juniperus Procera), or (Juniperus Phoenicoea) pencil cedar, is popular as a tall conifer, easy to split, moisture-resistent in rainy season, termite-resistent. It is one of the most important woods, and the only one of the traditional woods that is actually planted and protected by cut thornbushes against goats (which like to feed on the nursling). The grown tree resembles the cypress, and is the landmark of churches, churchyards and church schools. Thus the tree assumes a kind of sacredness, perhaps since pre-Christian times. In the tuqul it is often used as the horizontal, transversal beam. [778]

"Zigba" (Podocarpus elongata, or, Podocarpus gracilor) is a tall conifer of similar properties, with stringy, tough wood, used to make the alga bedsteads and other furniture.

"Ketketta" (Dodonea viscosa) is used for small carpentry, walking sticks; due to its slightly resinous but long-lasting qualities for torch parade at Kasqal or wedding festivities. The leaves have household uses. [313]

"Qwara" (Erytrina tomentosa), used for slats in simple carpentry.

824 313 417 "Genchub" bush, which resembles the euphorbia but grows at higher altitudes and is tougher, is cut and

●824 313 [417] placed on the outside of garden or hamlet-fences, to discourage hyenas, to keep livestock inside -- a natural barbed wire.

Eucalyptus tree ("bahĕr zaf") has become thoroughly rooted in Ethiopia. It is used in construction, especially of the more urban dwellings, as urban fuel, and its blue smoke and aroma is an early morning and evening feature of every town and market-town, where it is a major trade item. During the rainy season it grows so fast that a mature tree can be "harvested" 5 years after the nursling stage. Since it sells for $3-5 Ethiopian, (US $1-2) it is the most planted tree in Ethiopia today. The peasant also likes to use the odoriferous branches and leaves to cover the "dass" the festivity-shelter on marriages, etc., and the leafy branch as chera, flyswitch. Entire hillsides may be seen planted with this tree.

Female woods are also used for other indispensable products:

[386] [534] Ink - is made from the fruit of the "tămbălal" (Jasminum floribundum) tree, and its timer is used for the stock of the single-string violin, the masenqo. (But imported blue ink called "nil" is preferred by dăbtăra scribes.)

824 283 Fibre - for basketry, roof-hoops, etc. is obtained from the "wărqĕ" (musa ensete) (also called "enset") at lower altitudes, used especially for cords. Rope "gămăd" is made from the bark cut

824 [283] from a living, corky, African Baobab (Adansonia digitata), called "demma". Rope is also made from a tropical creeper of lower altitudes, called [324] "arag", or of reed fibers. Thatching grass of excellent quality is obtained from a strong, tall reed called "fala" which resembles papyrus and [293] grows on the shore of lakes. The "gecha" reed grows on the shore of rivers and is used to make the famous sun-umbrellas owned by every rural housewife, though once the privilege of kings and nobles.

[372] Fuel - Charcoal for firing pottery and smithing is made from the big "amfar" tree. Now also from the eucalyptus tree, but in rural areas the umbrella tree; "grar" is preferred because it does not have to be paid for.

[384] Dyestuff - the bark of the "wayba" tree was used to make the yellow dye for the togas of monks, now only in the more remote, change-resisting monasteries (most others wear white).

[222] Many other basic necessities for life and comfort are also obtained by collecting, by remembering where in the bush one has encountered the right kind or shape of plant, rather than planting and caring for it in gardens.

[388] Soap - is obtained in rural areas from the crushed fruit of the "endod" bush (Phytolacca Abyssinica).

824 281 Tannin for tanning and curing hides - is obtained from the bark of the "beshesha" bush; from the

824 [281] yellow fruit of an "embway" bush an astringent is made for depilation of hides.

[261] Butter is preserved and "perfumed" by boiling it with the leaves of the "ades" (myrtle) bush.

[263] Wild spice - used to flavor the flat taste of porridge during the long lenten fasting season, is obtained from a daisy-like flower "komär" with strongly scented foliage resembling camomile. But because it is "wild" it is despised at other times.

[262] Wild oil - in case of crop failure, "suf", sunflower seed (Carthamus tinctorus) is crushed for edible oil.

222 554 The element of shame at collecting rather than planting thus affects only those items directly connected with food consumption. The reason is that this would class the consumer with one who "hunts for subsistence", and such hunters are considered at the lowest social stratum.

Therefore, very little fruit is consumed by the Amhara, in view of the absence of any pattern of planting orchards. Even the wiesspread fig tree, planted for ages past for its broad shade, and used by ancient kings and judges when judging legal cases, is largely used for food only by children, ex-slaves and birds. Among the wild fruit consumed by these groups, are:

wild cherry - "gaba", a spiny tree with small fruit.

wild orange - "koshäm" (rumex abissinica), with sour fruit.

wild mulberry - "enjoriya", resembled blackberry, grows along rivers.

"gämärro" - (Capparis tomentosa), with edible red fruit.

291 are only of the last items to increase in prestige in very recent years, due to growing imitation of living patters of Addis Ababa. Coptic churches still require removal of footgear.

G. Sanitation.

515 Two traditional traits of health care and sanitation have already been mentioned in connection with the direct use of natural products: polishing teeth, and washing clothes.

[824] Hardwood twigs such as wild olive (Olea chrysophylla) called "wäyra", or of the "ahya" or "ächeme" bush (also softer ones of the type that Somali use in lower elevations) are held between the lips, by men or women, after meals. Even old men (in rural Ethiopia this means men over fifty) have most of their teeth as a result, with little sign of wear or decay. Much of this is due to this habit of polishing teeth and gums at odd moments, much as an American might chew gum. Before this polishing, the end of the twig to be used is masticated thoroughly, and the fibrous ends are then used. The Amhara belief is that this keeps the teeth in sharp condition--they do not do it with the idea of cleaning food remnants out of the mouth. The mental association is than of a bird sharpening its beak.

[296] Already noted also is the use of the potash content
[824] of the seed of the "endod" bush (Sircunia abyssinica, or, Phytolacca abyssinica), for laundering and washing.

Little more positive statements can be made about sanitation. When water is short in the dry season, which

28 Egypt since ancient times. Dyeing usually red, by means of native plants, accompanies the tanning process, for any good skin that is to be further manufactured.

Depilation is achieved by exposing the skin to a carefully controlled "sweating" process of natural putrefaction. A cowskin is soaked in water for 3 days, then dried and soaked in cow's urine for 3 days. The hair is thus loosened, the skin softened, so that it responds to easy depilation by rubbing with astringent plants:

[824]

"embwaḍho" - (Solanum margitanum)

"embway" - (Rumex alismafolius), a thistle, the crushed yellow fruit of which also acts as a preservative for the skin, since it contains tannin.

Then the skin is stretched tight on wooden pegs, to dry in the sun for one day. It is then rubbed with a stone for one day, which removes the last remaining hair except for a hairline or raised skin which is purposely left to indicate the pattern for the cutting that will take place later. The skin is then rubbed for one day with lemon ( which is commonly available) for a pickling effect.

It is now ready for dyeing. Sometimes, especially in the case of smaller (e.g. goat) skins, the dye is first prepared by boiling the plants in clay pots (the bark of the "qeratē" or other bush, or "enqoy" seed mixed with lemon juice), and then soaking and drying the skin several times after the dye has cooled. Cowskins are more often dyed by leaving them stretched and rubbing with the bark of the "beshesha" tree or leaves of the"qärät" ( or "qeratē") bush, for one day.

796 holy day of the year, "Mäsqäl", Feast of the Cross, on the 17th, and all who can prepare new garments. The countryside is freshly washed from 3 months of rains, and the sun is welcomed. It seems as if nature herself is beginning a new year, another annual cycle.

From St. John's Day, the first day of the year, children begin to gather the plentiful wildflowers, and to bring them to kinfolk across brooks which are again passable. These bouquets of daisies, "Mäsqäl abäba" i.e. Mäsqäl flower, are considered "enqutatash" (lit. take this tribute). This symbolism is linked to the first plant brought by the dove to the ark of Noah after the floods, which plant is said to have been the flower "engecha"; others say it is because King Solomon gave the Queen of Sheba a pearl of the type "enqwe".

In return, the children expect promises of gifts of new clothing for the Masqal feast. Even adults give "gursha" gifts to each other, of food or other items, and the increasingly generous sunshine and raised level of emotion inclines to generosity. Elders and old women who have turned nun bless every visiting kinsman with the formula:

"Blessed be He, (who) from time to time (one year to the next) has let you pass (in good fortune)."

796 776 The "Mäsqäl" Feast of the Cross, in Abyssinian church tradition, dated back to an early Christian Queen "Eleni" (Helena) who sponsored an expedition to Palestine to seek the true cross of the curcifixion. When she found it, she decided to announce the joyous news to her

759 upland, he notices and remembers the location of plants and roots, which supply him with much of his pharmacopeia. His sense of direction is trained and therefore seems uncanny to the layman. Moreover, not infrequently he actually transplants certain wild plants, so that he can always find them; sufficiently far from residential habitations so that they are not easily found or consumed by cattle or playful boys. A good rule for distance is how far the crowing of a rooster can be heard - for some plants are believed to lose their magical power if disturbed by this sound.

[825 ● 824] The "woggesha" usually learns his craft from his father, while serving him as apprentice. But at present the most popular "woggesha" in the town of Gondar is a well-known former bandit, who has gained an enviable reputation as a skilled surgeon. The "woggesha" is usually a diplomat in his human relations, much like the old-time Western family doctor. He usually tries to remain on good terms with the local church, and often invites the local dabtara to dinner at his house, especially on saints' days, to avoid their competitive hostility and to discuss some cases on a "professional" level.

[757] In his capacity as surgeon, the "woggesha" sets fractures, cuts abscesses, pulls teeth (now with European pliers). But some of his practices are severely condemned by European doctors who object particularly to the woggesha's frequent ripping out of part of the soft palate to cure tonsilitis and chronic sore throat, often causing blood poisoning. Nevertheless, the present government still permits the woggesha to function "in his own district", for otherwise most people would be left without any medical empiricist.

751 their happiness from showing. Eating and drinking in the open makes one
754 extremely vulnerable, because this arouses buda's greed, and at the
776 same time makes it easier to penetrate the victim's body, through the wide open mouth and unguarded nose. Therefore, old-time Amhara cover their faces when eating in front of strangers.

751 This attempt to reduce vulnerability is closely related to some
754 of the "language of the shamma" (toga). In the presence of strangers,
291 this can be draped in the fashion that indicates "reserve" - covering the mouth, or even nose and mouth, with the front section of the toga, which has been draped in a turtleneck. When travelling in strange districts, which are doubly dangerous because of cast-out buda spirits hidden by exorcisers along trails, a strong-smelling
[824] herb pushed in the nostril, is often used as a prophylactic. The most commonly used of these herbs is "tena adam" (lit. health of Adam, i.e. mankind). The mouth should be kept closed, or covered. In a fearful situation, he may say "shadow, may it not fall on me". Touching iron, considered specially "strong", also helps. Children are warned to stay away from strangers, and never to leave a baby unattended, lest "buda will eat you". The term "eat" is regularly used for buda possession (not for zar possession), for it indicates consumption.

751 Typhus ("talalafi basheta") and severe epilepay ("yabuda basheta")
754 the latter literally ascribed to buda (lit. buda disease) are the most
174 common ailments promptly diagnosed as "buda" "eating". Evidently
[164] Amhara doctors long ago observed that covering the mouth and nose and staying away from possibly infected strangers reduced the exposure to certain contagious diseases; they then proceeded to envelop this observation in the culture pattern, including the draping of the toga and stopping up the nose, and not eating uncovered in the presence of strangers. But they also fitted this pattern into their cosmology.

754 of her blood, her health, life itself. The eyes of the victim are
158 glazed, the nostrils distended, the face may wear a ghastly smile, and the body may be inflexible, or else in a nervous tremor. Relatives and "bread-companions" become terrified and run to the exorciser, often a dabtara, bringing him a gift called "agaba" (lit. entrance, i.e. visiting fee). By the time he arrives, the victim may be in contortions on the ground - being eaten by the buda. Some patients may try to hurt themselves, though others do not. When restrained, the patient may fight against the restraint, and women patients bite and scratch the restrainers.

Another classic case is total apathy, refusal to eat, and resistance even to the zar doctor, followed by sudden revival at night and the urge to run out and roam with the hyenas. Zar doctors explain this as a "zar being attached by a buda". An exorciser is then called in.

A common symptom of less violent character is nosebleed, which is very common. Persons vulnerable to this take care to
[824] stuff smelly plants into the nose when on the trail. Such protective plants are collectively called "yabuda reyan" (smells against the buda).

[851] Boys, when hazing the children of an ironsmith or suspected sorcerer sometimes force garlic ("chequn") into the nose of the child with such force as to cause nosebleed, saying "now give up the blood you have stolen". Garlic is believed to have the power
754 to stop a buda and is therefore buried under the door of a sus-
824 pected sorcerer, e.g. an itinerant smith travelling his circuit of customers; this is believed toprevent the buda from going out at night "to feed".

3: Buxton Y-5 (1946-1948)1949 MP5 Amhara MP5



variety) and linseed is grown in most parts of it. Where more shelter exists lentils and chick-pea are also planted, and another low-growing leguminous crop called *gwayo*, which is used only as a cattle fodder as it is believed to cause softening of the bones in man! The barley is planted early and the other crops late in the main rainy season (June–September). Barley is sometimes also planted in the early rains, which are very uncertain here but usually begin in February or March. In this area however the early crop rarely gives a good return and sometimes fails completely. The plateau land, after being cultivated for a few years (often until it shows obvious signs of exhaustion), is fallowed for a period which varies widely according to the type of soil, but may be as long as five or seven years.

Down in the gorges, where the climate is appreciably milder, and where a primitive sort of irrigation can be practised on the level shelves, both chick-pea and lentils flourish. Some *teff* (a grass-like cereal greatly favoured for making the local bread) can be grown, as well as wheat and barley. Shelf cultivation seems as a rule to be continuous, perhaps because of the fresh sediment spread annually over the fields by rain and irrigation. In the lower parts of the gorges some maize and millet (*Sorghum*) can be found, but almost the whole of the area included on the map is too high for these crops. Other gorge products, unknown on the plateau, are tomatoes, chillies, coffee and *gesho*—a shrub whose leaves are used for fermenting the local beer (*talla*) and honey-wine (*tej*). Bananas, for no obvious reason, are not grown, but are brought to Debra Berhan market from the low country beyond the eastern escarpment.

The agricultural methods of the Ethiopians are far more advanced than those of any surrounding territory and do not belong to Africa. They can be paralleled among the west-Asian peasantry, and a close comparison with the methods of the Yemen mountain people might be especially fruitful. It was from this latter region that the Ethiopians' ancestors emigrated, before the Christian era, and it is extremely probable that they brought with them both implements and a knowledge of techniques. Hence perhaps the use of the plough, universal among highland Ethiopians, and their skill in irrigation and terracing.

Farming in Ethiopia is primarily the man's and not the woman's work, the standard female occupation, apart from household cares, being spinning. (Cotton is widely grown in the lowlands.) The farmers spend most of their lives at the plough, a one-handled variety drawn by a yoke of oxen. In their right hand they carry a whip with a short handle and long, heavy thong which they continually whirl and crack above the heads of the oxen, to whom, at the same time, they address an endless succession of strange howls and shouts, curses and imprecations. New or long-fallowed grassland is broken in with the plough in the dry season. This complicated process (known as *gaf*) involves first scratching the ground in several directions to dislodge the turf, next gathering the sods into numerous heaps, then setting fire to these so that grass and weeds are gradually burnt out, and finally spreading out the soil again. But the great time for ploughing comes after the main rains have reduced the countryside to a sea of soft, dark mud. At this season the fields are peppered with ploughmen. Each successive sowing must be prepared

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5



world. Some are purely descriptive, like the notion that *budā* turn into hyenas after dark or ride hyenas like horses, or the belief that when red spots appear on the side of a clay pot when it is heated over a fire it means that the *ṭayb* who made the pot are fighting each other. Others guide him in warding off the evil ones, such as the idea that evil spirits can be kept away when a female child has been born by placing something of iron at the head of the mother's bed. But for serious trouble—when someone has been afflicted by a *zār* or infected by a *budā*—the folk wisdom does not suffice, and a specialist is sought.

The *ṭanquāy*, or "sorcerer," is consulted for exorcising demons as well as for physical ailments. In treating a *zār* patient his task is to discern, by clever interrogation, what manner of *zār* is riding the patient and then to determine what sort of gift is required to propitiate this *zār*. For a patient who has been "eaten" by the evil eye, he may succeed in summoning the guilty *budā*—identified when the patient calls out his name during a trance—and inducing him to spit on his victim; or he may resort to such techniques as transferring the demon from the victim to the body of a chicken and then killing the chicken. The *ṭanquāy* has other supernatural powers. He can summon the devil to liquidate the enemy of a client. He can interpret dreams and predict the future. For this he boils coffee, burns incense, and, sitting on a white sheepskin with freshly cut grass spread about the room, speaks out whatever comes to him.

The *dabtarā*, thanks to his knowledge of books and the lore acquired sub rosa while attending the church schools, wields many more powers than does the *ṭanquāy*. He can write amulets to keep away sickness and evil spirits. He knows formulas that can protect one from bullets and instill insatiable passion in the breast of one's beloved. He has the power to bring rain or make it stop, and to plague the householder by turning all of his possessions against him. Like the *ṭanquāy*, his expert knowledge of plants and herbs can heal the sick or poison the client's enemy. His superiority over the *ṭanquāy* is shown by the different manner in which he arranges a divination: he consults his heavy books, brews and interprets leaves, and then writes out his predictions on paper. For all this the *dabtarā*'s fees are usually higher, but his status is perhaps more precarious, for he is after all a man of the church. The peasant feels none too easy in dealing with one who both serves the church and deals with devils.

### *Time and Space*[7]

Devils, *zār*, evil eye, and sorcery are hidden in the crevices of Amhara mentality. They are spoken of, if at all, somewhat fearfully, and some Amhara pretend that such things no longer exist or are of little account in their culture. The sacred spirits, on the other hand, loom large in the public mind.

12:Young E-4,5 (1966) 1971 MP5 Amhara MP5
Begemder



278 222 iron, or in the "Arab" style, or the product of Falasha smiths, that it be double-edged, or have a handle of horn or some exotic wood. Similarly, recipes requiring roots may state that they be dug with a spade of specified characteristics, or with a digging stick of special wood. As for the gatherer, in some recipes, he is a virgin boy, in others naked or facing east. Circumstantially, [801] recipes established the day of the week on which the herbal may be obtained, and numerological details, such as the number of locations from which a particular herbal is to be gathered, and the number of samples to be taken from each place. [786] Finally, the gatherer may be required to recite, and perhaps repeat, a designated common prayer before cutting or digging the botanical.

278 824 Once gathered, medicaments must be processed using the equipment and following the procedures specified by the recipe as being necessary for releasing the healing powers from their botanical confinement and for guarding them from dilution or loss. Botanicals may be required fresh or dried, crushed or ground or whole, soaked or decocted or simply mixed with other medicaments, strained through cloth or not further refined. Occasionally, recipes direct that medicaments be cooked with mead or distilled spirits, but it is the liquid (or tincture) which is discarded. In other recipes, botanicals, particularly leaves, require no processing other than being chewed or

12:Young E-4,5 (1966) 1971 MP5 Amhara MP5
Begemder



*278 824 rubbed across the palm (releasing the juices to be licked up). Other herbals must be burned or boiled before becoming therapeutically active, in smoke or vapor.

*278 801 804 Both absolute and relative measurements are used. Among the former are mentioned handfuls, finger-joint lengths, and weights equivalent to a small egg. Relative measurements are most common during decocting. Required ratios suggest a numerological component here, reduction from seven volumes to one being the most frequently used ratio. Numerological elements appear elsewhere during processing, as when a recipe required, as a final step in processing, that the preparation be rolled into seven portions, or that the materia medica be steeped for seven days.

*278 415 Equipment used for processing medicaments is of common domestic origin, sometimes specified unused (e.g., pots for decocting, cloth for straining), sometimes worn (e.g., pitted mortars for grinding). Generally, the containers used cannot be allowed to rest directly upon the ground, but must sit upon stones, whose number and provenience (usually riverine) are likewise specified by the recipe.

*278 In addition to preparations consumed orally, herbalists provide fumitories, inhalents, instillations, gargles, lotions, poultices, and therapeutic amulets.

*278 *767 Herbal therapies further indicate the appropriate

*755
*756
*757
*759
752
758
*[792]



through the chirurgeon's massage.

Bleeding is regarded as a fatiguing experience for the client, and must be followed by a rest of two or three days. Bleeding for ras mitat is considered an exception, and no rest is required. However, the sickman is particularly vulnerable to gerifta during recuperation and, so, cannot leave his hut for fear of a relapse.

*755
*756
*757
*759
[826]
*[792]

The cupper is unique among lay practitioners in several respects. First, he occasionally works under the direction of another category of practitioner, the tagan (wogeysa). Second, there are special physical requirements; the agamiy must have all of his incisors, and the upper and lower teeth must meet in an unbroken plane. Third, the agamiy exposes himself to certain dangers in the performance of this therapy. Because he must remove a pathogenic substance through the medium of the sickman's blood, there is the danger that, should any of the blood enter his own mouth, the agamiy may himself fall ill with the ailment he is treating. In addition, contact with this blood threatens those chronic ailments from which the sickman suffers (such as the rheumatoid pains associated with kitin, syphilis).

[824]

The agamiy's cup is a short, hollow bovine horn, whose tip has been removed. Selected leaves, which have been dried and then steeped to make them pliable, are

12:Young E-4,5 (1966) 1971 MP5 Ambara MP5
Begemder

*787
*755
539



been mixed together with other ingredients (such as sacramental oil, juice or sap, animal blood or urine). The recipe further states which segments of the text (e.g., asmat) are to be represented in a contrasting [824] color (usually red). Finally, the botanical variety of reed with which the text is written may be determined also.

Beyond the effects gained from the manufacture of the digam itself, the text's goals are further augmented by materials which are included in the kitab, together [237] with the digam. These include, as indicated by the debtera's recipe, botanicals, often together with such exotic ingredients as a designated number of hairs from a lion's mane. The outer cover of the kitab is made of leather, but a debtera must determine if it should come from a wild or domestic animal, and, if the latter, what its sex and color should be. The digam is sewn into this, but whether the stitch should be to the right or to the left, whether the thread should be cotton or silk, and what its color should be, must also be con- [801] sidered first. The number of stitches to be made is likewise relevant, for numerological considerations suffuse the entire process of making the kitab. Nor are the makers of the kitab neglected; whether the debtera should be sexually continent before writing the digam, whether the cord by which the kitab is worn should be